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Speaking at foreign affairs conference Bush discusses China, CIA



Superintendent of the Naval Academy Adm. Kinniard R. McKee, left, George H. W. Bush, director of the Central Intelligence Agency and Capt. D. K. Forbes review the Brigade of Midshipmen.

By DAVID HUGHES Staff Writer

CIA Director George H. W. Bush said he won't release a single name of a CIA agent or a person cooperating with the agency as long as he heads the intelligence agency.

It was the only comment during his speech that drew applause from about 300 midshipmen and guests here Wednesday night. But Bush got a standing ovation at the end of the talk.

Bush got onto the topic of the CIA following his speech on Sino-American relations. He delivered the talks as the keynote of the 16th annual foreign affairs conference at the Naval Academy.

One student asked if the CIA is going to be divided into two branches: one for overt intelligence collection and one for covert operations.

"I don't believe it should happen. I don't believe it will," Bush said. "What is needed is not the dismantling of covert capability." The director added that the nation should have an alternative to sending in the Marines or doing nothing.

He challenged the students to enumerate more than a handful of CIA abuses which he as CIA director would agree are factual. Even so, the procedures in effect now at the agency are different from those used at the

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time the abuses occurred, Bush said.

"The sins of the past not withstanding, you can't conduct an intelligence business in the open," he said.

The CIA will work closely with whatever oversight procedure Congress prescribes, said Bush, who predicted a new era of openness between the agency and Capital Hill.

Another student asked him to explain China's reason for inviting former President Richard Nixon to visit during the presidential primary vote in New Hampshire.

"I don't think they were trying to influence the New Hampshire primary. They are not trying to meddle in U.S. internal politics," said Bush. The Chinese could care less about the primaries or the Watergate scandal, and invited Nixon to commemorate the fourth anniversary of an accord between our two nations, the Shanghai Communique, said Bush, who headed the U.S. delegation to Peking before his appointment to the CIA.

The former head of the American delegation in Peking said the Chinese Communists are more interested in reaffirming the ties established between the two nations during the Nixon administration.

At the end of the presentation, the CIA director received a standing ovation.